

SDNG RECRUITING AND RETENTION AMONG TOP LEVELS NATIONALLY

DAKOTA PACK

MAGAZINE OF THE SOUTH DAKOTA ARMY AND AIR NATIONAL GUARD • FALL 2008



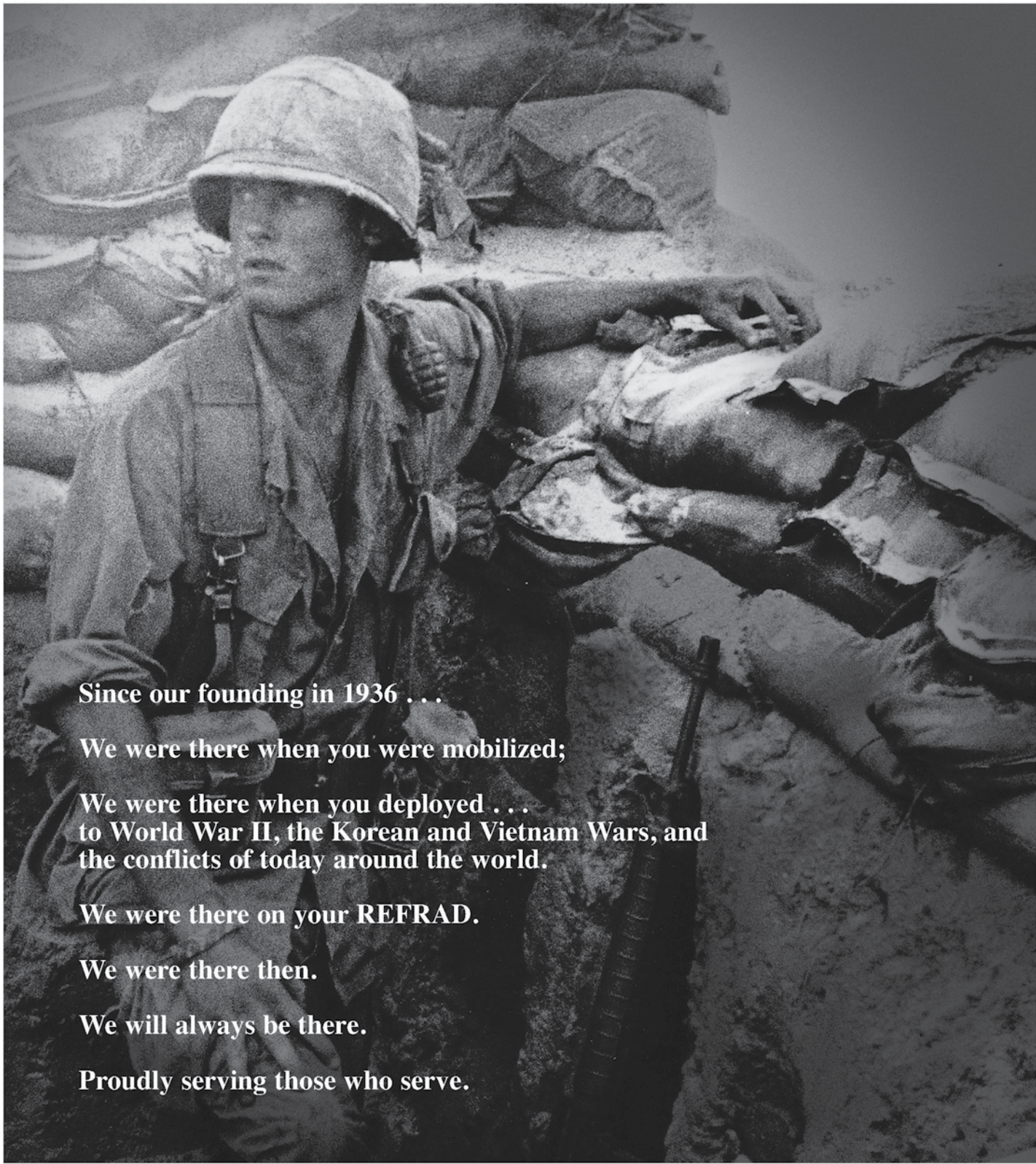
Engineers help to build
partnership during
BEYOND THE HORIZON

Women reaching top ranks in Guard

ETT "Coyote One" mentoring
Afghan Police and Soldiers

Army and Air units return home

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Magazine of the South Dakota Army and Air National Guard



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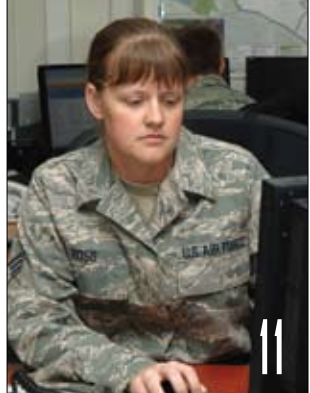
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On the cover

South Dakota Army National Guard Soldiers Pfc. Joey Koupal, of Dante, S.D., (left) and Pfc. Michael Wollman, of Brookings, S.D., both members of the 155th Engineer Company, take a break to pose atop a roof they were repairing at the Mulo M.G. Poolschool in Paramaribo, Suriname, during the Beyond the Horizon exercise in July. (Army National Guard photo by Sgt. Theanne Tangen)



THE ADJUTANT GENERAL

As your adjutant general, I celebrated my first year’s anniversary in September. As I look back on the year, it went by very quickly, and turned out to be one of the most challenging and rewarding years of my life. I had opportunities presented to me that I would have never dreamed of a couple years ago.

I just recently returned from a trip to Iraq to visit our troops. I had an opportunity to do the same in Afghanistan earlier this year. I can tell you that I have never been as impressed and proud of our South Dakota



Maj. Gen. Steven Doohen

Soldiers and Airmen as I was seeing them performing their missions so magnificently overseas. All the senior military leaders I talked to in theater could not say enough good things about how well our South Dakota Guard men and women

were performing.

As I start my second year as your adjutant general, I would like to thank all of our Guard men and women for their help in winning the Global War on Terror. I am extremely proud of each and every one of you because you are willing to make the sacrifices necessary for our country to continue to remain free. I am equally as proud and appreciative of the family members, spouses, parents, sons and daughters whose sacrifices are just as great but are not always recognized. Thanks again for a great year.

ASSISTANT ADJUTANT GENERAL-ARMY

It is a great day to be a member, past or present, of our South Dakota Army National Guard. I can’t begin to tell you how proud I am of the outstanding men and women who make up this great organization. My counterparts marvel at our strong recruiting and retention especially given the operational tempo of our organization.

The quality of Soldier coming into our organization is truly outstanding. They know the risk and yet continue to enlist and raise



Brig. Gen. Keith Corbett

their right hand and say, “In your time of need, send me.” We can attribute our strength to the legacy built by the great leaders and Soldiers of our past. Add to that the belief in defending freedom

and our way of life, and the outstanding training provided by our leaders, and you have a formula for success. My thanks to everyone who has made this the great organization it has become.

Regardless of the time you served or continue to serve, you can hold your head high knowing you helped make this a premier operational force.

I am proud to serve as your assistant adjutant general-Army.

STATE COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR

The very first Dakota Pack, what a great idea and opportunity to share the Guard’s success stories and to be kept up-to-date on issues concerning leadership, employers, family support, education, recruiting, veterans and retiree benefits, awards and promotions. In the upcoming issues, I will take an in-depth look into current issues that concern the enlisted Soldiers of the Army National Guard.

In this initial issue, I would like to introduce our latest selections for top enlisted positions, and then, inform everyone about the new Blue Army Service Uniform (ASU) that will become available within a year.

First, I want to publicly congratulate the 2008 selections for Command Sergeants Major and Sergeants Major positions in the Army National Guard. They include:



Command Sgt. Maj. Michael Bekaert

1st Sgt. Michael D. Burgeson, Command Sgt. Maj. of 153rd Engineer Battalion; 1st Sgt. Jerry D. Eisenbraun, Command Sgt. Maj. of 196th Regional Training Institute; 1st Sgt. Todd S. Rose, Operations Sgt. Maj. of 196th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade; and 1st Sgt. James A. Hoekman, Command

1st Sgt. Donald D. Weiland, Command Sgt. Maj. of 152nd Combat Service Support Battalion; 1st Sgt. Urban “Pete” Laber, Sgt. Maj. of Training Site Command; 1st Sgt. Patrick E. Couser, Command Sgt. Maj. of 881st Troop Command;

Sgt. Maj. of 139th Brigade Support Battalion.

In late August, I received the latest from NGB on the new Army service uniform to be issued in the next couple of years.

The Blue Army Service Uniform (ASU) reflects the input of hundreds of thousands of Soldiers and leaders from all Army components that have told the Army for the last two years what they want and expect in their new ASU. Soldiers want a uniform that reflects their pride of service, service traditions, and functionality.

The wear policy for the new ASU is intended to give Soldiers what they have asked for in a service uniform while maintaining the traditions of our service. The new ASU will include a new coat and low waist trousers for male Soldiers; and a new coat, slacks and skirt for female Soldiers.

The new fabric for the ASU is heavier and wrinkle resistant over previously manufactured uniforms and will consist of 55 percent wool and 45 percent polyester material. The new ASU coat will have a tailored, athletic cut, to improve uniform fit and appearance. The ASU will include a new improved heavier and wrinkle resistant short and long-sleeved white shirt with permanent military creases and shoulder loops.

The Army anticipates the new ASU items available for purchase in our military clothing sales in the last quarter of fiscal year 2009. The Army will place the new ASU items in the Soldier’s clothing bag for initial entry Soldiers in the last quarter of fiscal year 2010. The mandatory possession date for the new ASU is the last quarter of fiscal year 2014. This is also the wear-out date for the green Class A uniform.

The beret is the primary headgear worn

with the ASU by all Soldiers unless the commander directs wear of the service cap (for corporals and above).

In closing, I want to take this opportunity to truly thank each and every one of you for your service to our families, community, state and country. Please keep all of our service members and their families in your thoughts and prayers. Remember your leaders are committed to improving family readiness.

STATE COMMAND MASTER CHIEF

The “Mirror Force” concept, embraced and not so embraced, by the regular, Guard and Reserve forces of the United States Air Force has been a goal for many years now. The concept was simple in explanation. This strategic plan provided a blueprint to organize, train and equip our forces as one seamless team, with no distinction between these three components of the Air Force. Over the years, this concept has been incorporated into all aspects of readiness efforts. All integrated product teams, conferences, training activities, operating instructions and deployable assets stressed regular and Reserve component participation. It’s been a long road traveled, but the increased dependence on the Guard and Reserve forces over the last seven years has put us shoulder to shoulder with our regular counterparts, working day to day missions on a regular basis. So how far have we come?



Chief Master Sgt. Lane Munger

I was fortunate enough to have accompanied Maj. Gen. Steven Doohen, adjutant general for South Dakota, on his recent trip to Iraq to visit with our South Dakota folks deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

There, I had an opportunity to talk to Chief Master Sgt. David W. Williamson, command chief master sergeant of the 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing, Joint Base Balad, Iraq. In our talks I asked about the Guard and regular forces, and in particular how close are we to this “mirror” concept outlined so many years ago.

He explained that seeing Air National Guard people in amongst regular forces, there’s no way to differentiate between them. Courtesies, appearances,

attitudes, military professionalism is indistinguishable. Pride in themselves, their work, their accomplishments, their unit, and ability to complete the missions they are tasked with, is the same as with the regulars.

I joking stated that I would have

rather had him state it easy to spot a Guardsman...that it’s easy to pick out the best in the crowd. I knew what he meant and it was meant as a compliment. I also felt that opinions on what the Reserves bring to the fight had also changed. We are one Air Force, held to the same standards, working together to accomplish the same missions.

As a Guardsman, I’ve always known how good we are and maybe it took this current conflict to allow others in the regular component enough time, association and experiences to realize the Air National Guard is first-class, and first-rate, in everything we do.

The trip to Iraq was a privilege for which I am very grateful. It was a great opportunity to see our folks doing what we prepare for month after month and talk to them about their experiences.

The mood of those I was able to talk to, was very upbeat. Most said it was due to being less apprehensive - they had been there before and knew what to expect. But even the “newbies” seemed focused and positive. Obviously the “veterans” had

done a good job settling the fears of those who were there for the first time.

With little more to do than eat, sleep and work (maybe a swim and a movie), the upgraded facilities in which to work out of seems to make time “in the sand” a little easier to take. But the 114th came to work and provide - and that’s exactly what we’re doing. It was no surprise to hear the 114th repeatedly “wows” the regular forces with its expertise and ability to continually provide, load and fly code one aircraft. Our unit takes a backseat to no one.

Though the atmosphere around the big square table in maintenance seemed relaxed as we visited, everyone realizes the threats of attacks are a reality they wonder about day to day. A reality, that continues to keep everyone’s head in the game. It will be good to have everyone home.

On a more personal note, the trip also afforded my son Robert, who is finishing up his 15-month Iraqi tour with the Army, and I a few hours to share together. His visit was made even more special by having General Doohen conduct his re-enlistment ceremony.

It was a once-in-a-life-time event for us to be together in Iraq. We were, however, disappointed that there was no Wall Drug mileage sign erected on base to have our picture taken next to. There was only one to Humbolt, South Dakota. I don’t know... maybe Humbolt has free ice water, too.

In any case, special thanks to Lt. Col. Joel Degroot, 1st Sgt. Jeff Vanderwoude, and everyone else who welcomed Rob as a South Dakotan far from home. He sends his regards and thanks to the Wing.

AROUND THE WORLD

PLAYGROUND VOLUNTEERS



National Guard Soldiers from the 139th Brigade Support Battalion and 115th Signal Network Support Detachment volunteered to assist the community of Brookings, S.D., with the installation of new playground equipment on July 17 and 18. The new equipment is part of the Camelot Intermediate School that will be the future school for all 4th and 5th grade students in the Brookings School District. Back Row (left to right): Sgt. 1st Class Jeff Wessels, Staff Sgt. Eric Kinslow, Sgt. Brandon Hewson, Staff Sgt. Chad Brandsrud and Master Sgt. Jack DeBlonk. Front Row (left to right): Sgt. Matthew Tjaden, Staff Sgt. Colleen Convey-Wilson, Capt. Rebecca Trygstad and Sgt. Shonda Nelson. (Army National Guard photo)

RUNNING AND SHOOTING



South Dakota Army National Guardsman Sgt. Jamie J. Bachman assists Mike Scharn, a Stevens High School student, during a summer biathlon (run and shoot) competition on Wednesday, Aug. 27, at West Camp Rapid hosted by the South Dakota Army National Guard Biathlon Team for the Stevens Raiders Cross-Country Running Team. The purpose of the event is to introduce young athletes to the sport of biathlon, running and rifle marksmanship. The event provided local high school athletes with a training opportunity to develop skills that support the upcoming cross-country season. (Army National Guard photo by 1st Sgt. Donald Matthews)

South Dakota Army National Guard Soldier Sgt. Callen Clavel, flight medic with Company C, 1st Battalion, 189th Aviation Regiment, along with Finish Soldiers, load a patient during medical evacuation training on Sept. 12, at a Finish camp near the capitol city of Pristina, Kosovo. (Photo courtesy Co. C, 1/189th AV)



MEDEVAC TRAINING

SURPASSING BENCHMARKS



Sgt. Matthew Bisson, parts and tools sergeant from Dell Rapids, S.D., explains inventory procedures with Col. Muthana (left) and Sgt. Maj. Hussein on July 17, during an Iraqi Army visit to Contingency Operating Base Adder. Bravo Battery was selected to host the visiting official's examination of maintenance operations by outscoring all other maintenance sections at COB Adder and surpassing every maintenance benchmark set before them. (Army National Guard photo by Spc. Charles Butler)

WORKING TOGETHER



Cpl. Stanley Dejezus, member of the Suriname Army, works along side Spc. John Vakiner, of Sioux Falls, S.D., member of the 155th Engineer Company, South Dakota Army National Guard, to cut and roll wire for the renovation project at the Lagere Technical School IV as part of the Beyond the Horizon 2008 exercise on Friday, July 11, in Paramaribo, Suriname. (Army National Guard photo by Sgt. Theanne Tangen)

TOP IT OFF



Tech. Sgt. Jeremy Edgar fills the external fuel drop tanks on an F-16 Fighting Falcon on Aug. 25. Edgar, an aircraft maintenance journeyman with the 332nd Expeditionary Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, is an Air National Guardsman deployed from the 114th Fighter Wing at Joe Foss Field, S.D. His hometown is Rochester, Minn. (Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Erik Gudmundson)

IN THE HOT SEAT



Lt. Col. Gary Middlebrooks, piloting an F-16 Fighting Falcon, waits in a hot pit area near a taxiway for his wingman as sunset approaches on Aug. 17. Fighters taxi to hot pit areas before takeoff so Airmen can ready the aircraft's weapons systems for combat. Middlebrooks, a pilot with the 332nd Expeditionary Fighter Squadron is deployed from the South Dakota Air National Guard's 114th Fighter Wing at Joe Foss Field, Sioux Falls, S.D. (Air National Guard photo by Master Sgt. Nancy Ausland)

A LITTLE LUBE WILL DO THE JOB



Maj. Stephen Sewell of Webster, S.D., and officer in charge of the Police Training Surge for the South Dakota Army National Guard Embedded Training Team "Coyote One" instructs Afghan National Army trainees how to clean a rifle after a weapons familiarization class on July 23 at FOB Konduz in northern Afghanistan. About 100 trainees are participating in the PTS, an eight week basic training course for newly assigned Afghan National Police officers and Soldiers designed to teach them military and law-enforcement tactics, techniques and procedures. (Photo courtesy SDNG ETT)

STICK 'EM UP



South Dakota National Guard Embedded Training Team member Staff Sgt. Adam Herrmann of Rapid City, S.D., describes proper pistol grip and firing techniques to an Afghan policeman in August near the village of Ghorwach in northwest Afghanistan. Herrmann, along with other members of the ETT and coalition Soldiers from Latvia, conducted a course to help train Afghan Police Forces in weapons familiarization. (Army National Guard photo by Sgt. 1st Class Darnell Hubbard)

BEYOND THE HORIZON 08

Renovations in Suriname a success



A CUT ABOVE
155th Engineer Company member Pfc. Chase Cummings of Rapid City, S.D., uses a saw to cut a piece of plywood as fellow unit member Spc. Justin Cosenza (right) of Rapid City, S.D., and Pfc. Courtney Sherbrook of Belle Fourche, S.D., 842nd Engineer Company, hold the plywood in place at the De Nieuwe Grond Clinic on Saturday, July 12, in Wanica, Suriname. The South Dakota Army National Guard Soldiers were participating in the Beyond the Horizon exercise.

Story by Sgt. Theanne Tangen and Pfc. Jacqueline Fitzgerald
Photos by Sgt. Theanne Tangen
129th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

PARAMARIBO, Suriname – Suriname citizens may not recognize the De Nieuwe Grond Clinic thanks to South Dakota Army National Guard Soldiers’ involvement in Beyond the Horizon 2008. A closing ceremony took place on Wednesday, July 30, at the clinic in Wanica, Suriname to commemorate the successful completion of all the engineer projects that were conducted as a part of the BTH08 exercise.

Surinamers now look twice at the two-toned green clinic they enter for treatment, but a new coat of paint is not all the South Dakota Soldiers accomplished while at this project site.

“Things I can see and feel and touch - a fresh coat of paint, the new walls and cabinets in this clinic are real benefits for real people made possible by the friendships between Surinamers and South Dakotans through the State Partnership Program,” said U.S. Ambassador Lisa Bobbie Schreiber Hughes during the closing ceremony. “South Dakota friends, your work is incredibly impressive. As an American, I am proud to have you as my countrymen and I thank you.”

The De Nieuwe Grond Clinic was just one of six engineering projects completed by members of the 155th Engineer Company and 153rd Engineer Battalion, SDARNG, during the month of July around the capitol city of Paramaribo, Suriname.

Repairing rain gutters, replacing termite damaged walls, installing new wiring and performing other renovations were just some of the many upgrades the plumbers, electricians and carpenters of the 155th and 153rd made at De Nieuwe Grond Clinic, Houttuin Clinic, Pontbuiten Clinic, Mulo M.G. Poolschool and Lagere Technical



Spc. Neal Eisenbraun of Wisner, Neb., member of the 155th Engineer Company, hands over a trowel to Reggield Misidjan, a volunteer whose mom is a teacher at the Mulo M.G. Poolschool. Reggield helped the Soldiers fill holes in the cement with putty on Monday, July 21, in Paramaribo, Suriname.

School I and IV.

More than 210 Soldiers from the South Dakota Army National Guard made up the two rotations that were a part of the BTH08 exercise for about six weeks in Suriname. The exercise was a training opportunity that allowed units to hone their specific military skills, as well as gain experience in deployment and redeployment situations. The renovation project at De Nieuwe Grond is a prime example of the craftsmanship of the South Dakota Soldiers and the difference they

ENGINEER INGENUITY

155th Engineer Company member Sgt. Kenneth McGhee heats the end of a plastic pipe to get a better fit into a rain gutter down spout as fellow member Sgt. Benjamin Van Eye looks on. Both Soldiers, from Rapid City, S.D., were helping to refurbish the Lagere Technical School IV located in Paramaribo, Suriname, during the Beyond the Horizon exercise this past July.



made in the lives of Suriname citizens.

“Things looked terrible in the clinic,” said Bianca Brethweite, pharmacist assistant at De Nieuwe Grond. “Termites had eaten up everything; doors and furniture. It didn’t look good and people didn’t feel confident in getting their medicine here.”

“When we got here everything was broken and falling apart,” said Sgt. William Domagall of the 155th Engineer Company of Rapid City. They didn’t have necessities for storage so we put in shelving. We also did painting and used metal studs to help prevent future termite damage.”

According to Domagall, the goal for the 155th was to make a comfortable learning environment and make clinics more appealing and sanitary.

“People would look at the building, turn away and never come back,” said Brethweite. “It was horrible and smelled bad, but now patients have been saying the clinic looks



Above: Sgt. Steven Allen, of Black Hawk, S.D., and 155th Engineer Company member, smooths out the finishing of a concrete patch on a wall in the De Nieuwe Grond Clinic in Wanica, Suriname, during the Beyond the Horizon exercise in July.

Left: 155th Engineer Company Soldier Pfc. Duncan Anderson, of Brookings, S.D., tightens the bolts of a basketball hoop to a new backboard as a Suriname Soldier assist at the Mulo M.G. Poolschool gymnasium in Paramaribo, Suriname, during the Beyond the Horizon exercise in July.



beautiful and are happy to come in and get treatment.”

Before the renovation project, patients waiting for prescriptions, as well as those waiting to see the doctor, sat in the same waiting area. With an average of more than 70 patients a day, people waiting for prescriptions made the small clinic crowded. Soldiers poured a slab of concrete and installed a roof to the outside patio of the clinic. This allowed people to walk up to get their prescriptions through a window; reducing the waiting line inside the building.

After pouring concrete outside the pharmacy window, Domagall wrote the unit name in the corner before it dried. While people are standing in line waiting for their prescriptions, they will be reminded of the South Dakota Soldiers who spent two weeks renovating the clinic.

“The team here, and at all the sites, have been working hard with challenges of getting supplies in Suriname and the timeframe we were given to complete the projects,” said Domagall. “Everybody has worked hard and the craftsmanship is really evident in the final results.”

“It’s a good thing for the U.S. troops to help here in Suriname,” said Brethweite. “I am looking forward to the next project they work on.”

Upper right (from left to right): Spc. Kale Skogen of White, S.D., and Rapid City, S.D., residents Mike Kroells, Pfc. Chase Cummings and Sgt. William Domagall, members of the 155th Engineer Company, construct a cement pad at the De Nieuwe Grand Clinic on Saturday, July 12, in Wanica, Suriname.

Right: Sgt. William Domagall of Rapid City, S.D., a member of the 155th Engineer Company, puts the finishing touches to the pad of cement at the De Nieuwe Grand Clinic they constructed by signing his unit’s name as part of Beyond the Horizon exercise on Saturday, July 12, in Wanica, Suriname.



HAMMER TIME

155th Engineer Company member Sgt. David Remme, of Vermillion, S.D., hammers new chain link mesh at the Lagere Technical School I located in Paramaribo, Suriname, during the Beyond the Horizon exercise in July.



Above: Staff Sgt. Mark Pier, of Crofton, Neb., (left) and Spc. Brian Johnson, of Hill City, S.D., members of the 155th Engineer Company, carry replacement rain gutters for installation onto the De Nieuwe Grand Clinic in Wanica, Suriname, during the Beyond the Horizon exercise in July.

Far left: Spc. Ryan Jungeman, of Huron, S.D. and 153rd Engineer Battalion member, applies a fresh coat of paint to a wall in the Houttuin Clinic on Thursday, July 17, in Paramaribo, Suriname, during the Beyond the Horizon exercise in July.

Left: 155th Engineer Company members Spc. Brian Bierem, of Tyndall, S.D., (left) and Spc. Ryan Cihak, of Dante, S.D., replace chain link mesh around a classroom at the Mulo M.G. Poolschool in Paramaribo, Suriname, during the Beyond the Horizon exercise in July.

GUARD UNITS RECEIVE A VISITOR FROM HOME

By Spc. Charles J. Butler
Unit Public Affairs Representative
Bravo Battery, 1st Battalion, 147th Field Artillery

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE ADDER, Iraq – Closing in on the end of their deployment, South Dakota Army National Guard Soldiers from Battery B, 1st Battalion, 147th Field Artillery ceased operations for a safety stand-down day and to welcome a visitor from home; Maj. Gen. Steven Doohen, adjutant general of the South Dakota National Guard, on Aug. 21, at COB Adder, Iraq.

“It means a lot to the Soldiers to have the general come at the most psychologically difficult time of the deployment,” said Capt. Jason Warr of Rapid City, executive officer of Bravo Battery. “Getting this visit was a good reminder of the support we have back home and I am certain this will help carry the guys through to the end”.

South Dakota Guardsmen gathered to listen to the adjutant general provide some words of encouragement on heading into the homestretch of the deployment.

“You are all doing an outstanding job,” said Doohen. “Keep focused, don’t let up, and continue with your level of professionalism and ‘can do’ work ethic.”

Doohen was briefed by leaders of the field artillery unit on their mission and toured the unit’s facilities and equipment. Doohen commented on how South Dakota’s Guard presence and reputation is well known all over Iraq.

“Everywhere you go, everyone recognizes the South Dakota coyote patch and the hard work and determination of those Soldiers wearing it,” said Doohen. “I am just proud to be a part of this great Guard team.”

As Bravo Battery Soldiers head into their final month of missions, it is theater policy to conduct a safety stand-down day to ensure all Soldiers remain focused and not become complacent in their daily operations. Soldiers attended several safety briefings regarding vehicle rollovers, escalation of force, electrical hazards, and other common



Chief Warrant Officer Michael Johnson, unit maintenance technician from Sioux Falls, S.D., explains the capabilities of the Armored Security Vehicle (ASV) to Maj. Gen. Steven Doohen, the adjutant general of the South Dakota National Guard, during a visit to Battery B, 1st Battalion, 147th Field Artillery on Aug. 21, at COB Adder, Iraq. (Army photo by Spc. Charles J. Butler)



Specialist Craig Evenson of Clear Lake, S.D., shakes hands with Maj. Gen. Steven Doohen, the adjutant general of the South Dakota National Guard, during a visit to Battery B, 1st Battalion, 147th Field Artillery on Aug. 21, at Contingency Operating Base Adder, Iraq. (Army National Guard photo by Spc. Charles J. Butler)

safety threats that Soldiers may encounter.

“With our time here drawing near, it was a good stopping place,” said Sgt. Jason Lunders of Salem, S.D. “As hard as it may be, we need to try not to think about going home quite yet and keep our focus on the mission at hand.”

Doohen also had an opportunity to first visit members of the 114th Fighter Wing, South Dakota Air National Guard at Joint Base Balad. The Airmen of the 114th recently began their deployment in support of the United States Air Force’s Air Expeditionary Force (AEF) and Expeditionary Combat Support (ECS) rotation plans. Currently, more than 350 Airmen of the state’s 114th Fighter Wing are deployed to seven countries throughout the world in support of Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom.

ALL IN THE FAMILY

Command post controller upholds proud tradition



Above: Staff Sgt. Justin Sisson guides an F-16 Fighting Falcon, piloted by Lt. Col. Michael “Oscar” Meyers, into a hangar to receive fuel Aug. 25. Sisson is an aircraft maintenance technician with the 332nd Expeditionary Aircraft Maintenance Squadron. Meyers is a pilot with the 332nd Expeditionary Fighter Squadron. Both are Air National Guardsmen deployed from the 114th Fighter Wing at Joe Foss Field, S.D. (Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Erik Gudmundson)

Left: Senior Airman Elizabeth Ross conducts flight following at the 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing Command Post on Aug. 19. Flight following consists of tracking all inbound and outbound aircraft and coordinating ground support. Ross, a command and control journeyman, is deployed from the South Dakota Air National Guard’s 114th Fighter Wing. (Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Erik Gudmundson)

By Staff Sgt. Don Branum
332nd Air Expeditionary Wing Public Affairs

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – When a command post controller with the 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing answered her nation’s call by joining the Air National Guard in 2004, she also upheld her family’s proud tradition of military service.

Senior Airman Elizabeth Ross is both an ANG Airman and the daughter of an ANG Airman. Her work on duty and as a volunteer reflects her heartfelt commitment to serve her country.

“I felt that joining the Air Force was something I needed to do as a citizen,” said Airman Ross, who is deployed from the South Dakota ANG’s 114th Fighter Wing.

She wasn’t initially interested in joining, choosing instead to go to the University of Minnesota after high school. But after she graduated, earning a bachelor’s degree in child psychology and sociology, she decided to enlist.

“I joined in my own time,” she said. “My father had tried to get me to join all along.”

When she did make the decision, it caught her father, retired Master Sgt. Blaine Ross, slightly off guard.

“He thought that because I had finished college, that I had moved past my interest in it,” she said, “but he was very supportive of my decision and happy that I finally joined.”

Two of Airman Ross’ three sisters also followed their father’s example: 1st Lt. Laurie Ross is a protocol officer deployed to Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan, from the National Guard Bureau in Washington, D.C. One of her younger stepsisters, 2nd Lt. Brittany Brewer, is an intelligence officer at Mountain Home Air Force Base, Idaho, and is tasked to deploy later this year.

Since joining, Airman Ross has remained on active-duty status. The Guard’s command post controllers are always in high demand to respond to natural disasters and other missions within the United States, she said. Continued on page 27



STATE PARTNERSHIP

Improving South Dakota and Suriname economies

Story by Sgt. Theanne Tangen
129th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

PARAMARIBO, Suriname – Richard Benda, secretary for the South Dakota Department of Tourism and State Development, is working with the South Dakota National Guard's State Partnership Program to focus on creating jobs that are productive and rewarding for citizens of South Dakota and Suriname.

During the month of July, Benda and Lt. Col. Tracy Settle, State Partnership Program director, spent a week visiting business leaders in Paramaribo to exchange ideas on possible business opportunities that will benefit South Dakota and Suriname. During their visit, they spoke with company CEOs and Suriname State Department officials like Clifford Marica, Suriname Minister of Trade and Development.

"The exciting part of my job is the opportunity to travel and meet new people," said Benda.

The State Partnership Program helps U.S. states and partner nations connect and exchange valuable information and build relationships. South Dakota was chosen to partner with Suriname based upon similarities in population size, land mass, agricultural based economies and lack of significant language barriers.

"We met friendly people everywhere we went. Surinamers were interested in what we are doing, and we are interested in the partnership and seeing their country grow and prosper," said Benda. "That is the setting for a perfect foundation for this relationship."

While in Suriname, Benda and Settle toured the Jumbo Group of Companies, a factory that produces a well-known product called

An employee of Jumbo Group of Companies crafts a candlestick as S. Baldew (center), chief executive officer of Jumbo Group, explains the woodworking process to Richard Benda, South Dakota's secretary of Department of Tourism and State Development on Thursday, July 17, in Paramaribo, Suriname. (Army National Guard photo by Sgt. Theanne Tangen)



Lt. Col. Tracy Settle
State Partnership
Program Director

'peet furniture' made from sixteen various kinds of woods including mahogany and purperhart. The company also makes 'peet souvenirs' such as bowls, ashtrays, and candlesticks.

"Suriname has access to reasonably priced wood. Their companies can afford to have an estimated waste of 65 to 70 percent of raw wood material," said Benda. "This could be a potential opportunity for U.S. based companies who currently take waste products from wood factories and make them into other usable supplies for construction or for furniture."

Jumbo Company employs approximately 100 people who work at the factory. According to Benda, the goal of the State Partnership Program is to ensure the right U.S. and Suriname personnel, with the right skills and qualifications, pair up with these Jumbo employees to build relationships not only on a business level but on a personal level too. The program is designed to offer assistance and advice to the U.S. and Suriname to strengthen their economy.



"The benefit of the State Partnership Program is we can bring experts from S.D. and the U.S. to Suriname to say – we have been through these trials, not that we did it correctly or that we know everything," said Benda. "Hopefully they can learn from our experiences."

Officials from Suriname and South Dakota hope these developing relationships will grow and continue for future generations to come. According to Benda, our children are growing up in a global economy, and we must understand how we can benefit each other.

An excellent opportunity could be gained through the jewelry manufacturers, craftsmen, and sketch artists to make connections with the nine Sioux tribes throughout the state of South Dakota. There could be an exchange of hand-made crafts resulting in more demand of products for each partner.

"I hope when we get done we can look back in a few years and say that both South Dakota and Suriname are better off," said Benda. "They have more jobs, and the economy is better thanks to this partnership."

Det. 48 returns home from Afghanistan deployment



RAPID CITY, S.D. – Soldiers from Rapid City's Detachment 48, Operational Support Airlift (OSA) Command, South Dakota Army National Guard returned home on Friday, Aug. 29, after a six-month deployment in support of Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan.

Detachment 48, comprised of five pilots and two operations specialists, provided aviation support by flying two high-performance C-12R Huron aircraft. Each aircraft is capable of transporting up to eight personnel or other types of high-value cargo.

While deployed, the unit operated out of seven airports in Afghanistan; Bagram, Kabul, Kandahar, Jalalabad, Herat, Mazur E Sharif, and Sharana and traveled throughout eight other countries in the U.S. Central Command's theatre of operations.

The C-12R is a pressurized fixed-wing aircraft and powered by a twin-engine turboprop system. The pilots who fly this aircraft provided a rapid-response delivery system to units throughout the region, delivering various cargos including personnel, vital repair parts, or lifesaving medical supplies. The unit completed 165 missions, transporting 1,080 passengers and 29,450



Above: Chief Warrant Officer Jose Rodriguez Jr. hugs his wife Martha during the welcome home ceremony of Detachment 48, OSA on Friday, Aug. 29, in Rapid City. (Army National Guard photo by 1st Sgt. Don Matthews)

Below: Members of Detachment 48, OSA stand during the welcome home ceremony at the Army Aviation Support Facility in Rapid City on Friday, Aug. 29. (Army National Guard photo by 1st Sgt. Don Matthews)

pounds of cargo, and logging more than 490 flight hours.

The seven members of Det. 48 arrived in Afghanistan on Feb. 14 and were awarded five Air Medals and two Army Commendation Medals for their six months of service in support of OEF.



HISTORICAL ACHIEVEMENT

Women reach top ranks in the South Dakota National Guard

By Jasper DesLauriers
Public Affairs Intern

RAPID CITY, S.D. – RESPONSIBILITY and HISTORY. Those two words best describe last May’s opening formation for Joint Forces Headquarters at Camp Rapid.

That’s when Diann Deyo proudly took her position in front of the 193-member unit and stepped into history as the first women in the South Dakota National Guard to become a first sergeant.

She now becomes responsible for the accountability and welfare of her Soldiers and will help guide her unit in the areas of personnel, training, logistics and unit readiness.

“We can do just about anything a man can,” said Deyo, who works full-time as a management analyst for the National Guard’s maintenance office. “When I started, a woman had to be in the administrative field.”

Deyo is one of about 459 women currently serving in the South Dakota Guard. Overall, women now represent about 13.6 percent of its total 3,360 members. As of July, nearly half of the women hold leadership positions ranked E-5 and above - 47 officers and 159 noncommissioned officers.

Deyo isn’t alone when talking about recent ‘firsts’ for SDNG

From left to right: Chief Warrant Officer Darla Crown, Col. Nancy Wetherill, Sgt. Maj. Kris Tvinnereim and 1st Sgt. Diann Deyo are the first women to serve within their respective rank in the South Dakota Army National Guard.
(Army National Guard photo by 1st Sgt. Donald Matthews)

women over the past 10 years.

In the officer ranks, Col. Ruth Christopherson, rural Garretson, is currently serving as the first female to hold the position of chief of staff for the Air National Guard in Sioux Falls.

Nearly a decade ago, Nancy Wetherill, Rapid City, became the first female to achieve the rank of full colonel, and later became commander of the 109th Engineer Group and led the units of Task Force Coyote during a one-year tour in Afghanistan.

In 2002, Darla Crown, of Rapid City, became the first female to be promoted to chief warrant officer five, a relatively new rank for top warrant officers that was establishment 17 years ago.

And just two years ago, Kris Tvinnereim, Webster, was selected as the first sergeant major. She has worked in personnel and administration for her entire 34-year career.

Despite the recent promotions, many women in the ranks are left wondering why it has taken so long for females to gain a bit of equity in what has been a ‘male-dominated’ force.

“It takes an entire career for anyone, male or female, to reach these

high-level ranks – 20 to 30 years,” said Maj. Deb Bartunek, deputy human resource officer who has worked equal opportunity issues works over the years.

“These women got in at the beginning and worked hard to get to the top,” she said. “This is just the beginning and we should be seeing more women in leadership positions in the future.”

Despite the origins of the SDNG dating back more than 146 years, women were not allowed to enlist until the early 1970’s or about the same time the military moved forward with its ‘all volunteer” force.

It was not until September 1971 that National Guard Bureau announced that prior service women, those not requiring basic or military skills training, could be enlisted in the ARNG.

Having served in the Women’s Army Corps (1966-1967), Faulkton native Susan Rodriguez was the first enlisted female to join the SDNG when she joined in 1971. She serve 33 years and retired as a lieutenant colonel in 2005.

The authority to enlist new, non-prior service, recruits into the Army Guard was issued in May 1972. Within six years, the number of women in the ARNG climbed to nearly 13,353 nationwide.

Although women are prevented from direct combat missions, given the support roles they now play, combined with the fluid nature of modern war, it’s inevitable that some women will find themselves under fire.

Hundreds of other National Guard women experienced combat during Operation Desert Storm in 1991. Many of these women were in direct combat support roles and performed their missions as well as their male counterparts, and the same is true for women serving today in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Now, women can serve in 2,825 – three-fourths – of the total positions of the SDARNG. These jobs include maintenance, engineering, transportation, supply, administration, medical, communication, security, logistics and public affairs.

Each joined for different reasons:

Colonel Ruth Christopherson enlisted in the South Dakota Air National Guard in 1978, and received her commission as an officer in 1987. She is now the chief of staff in headquarters at the air base in Sioux Falls.

Both she and her husband, Lt. Col. Reid Christopherson, have made a big impact on the Air Guard since both joined in the 70’s and their son, Nathan, served in Iraq with



Col. Ruth Christopherson

the SDARNG Company B, 109th Medical Battalion.

She admits women in the Guard weren’t always so common.

Christopherson says, “You’d go to another base, and it’s like, oh, you’re a woman. If you were in uniform, the older members would always question it.”

Colonel Christopherson says gender aside, she has a real passion for what she does, and she says that’s the most important thing.

Christopherson says, “Hopefully, I have inspired others.”

She works as the managing director for the Wholesale Lending Channel Operations Division for CitiMortgage, headquartered in O’Fallon, Mo.

Chief Warrant Officer Five Darla Crown joined the active-duty Army 35 years ago, right out of high school, for educational benefits and the opportunity to travel. After her three-year commitment, she joined the Guard while going to college.

Crown’s career is filled with important milestones and memories and the most significant being promoted to chief warrant officer five.

Crown said being a female in the military has never been an issue for her to achieve what she wanted to accomplish.

“I have never bought into that whole gender-difference issue,” said Crown. “I have never experienced any obstacles in regard to what I wanted to accomplish.”

Colonel Nancy Wetherill grew up in the military as her father completed a career in the Air Force. She joined the 842nd Engineer Company in 1974 while attending Black Hills

State University.

Her recent deployment to Afghanistan was “no doubt” her proudest moment.

“My greatest accomplishment was leading a brigade combined task force of engineers in support of Operation Enduring Freedom,” said Wetherill.

Combined Task Force Coyote cleared mines, placed thousands of cubic yards of concrete for airfield ramps, built two of the largest detainee facilities, built hundreds of tent platforms for troops, and constructed 27 miles of a 74 mile road through the heart of Taliban country.

Wetherill’s advice to young women considering joining is to simply do their best.

“Know your job, do it better than any one else,” said Wetherill. “Set your standards high, have passion for your position, and don’t forgo your integrity to get ahead.”

Sergeant Maj. Kris Tvinnereim did not join the Guard in a traditional manner. Her husband was in the Guard when she started working for the Webster National Guard unit as a civilian temporary technician in 1974. At the time, she was eight months pregnant and enjoyed her work so much that she decided to enlist in July of 1975.

“There is absolutely more opportunity for women now,” said Tvinnereim. “When I first started, women were only in the medical or administration fields.”

Tvinnereim said her job is gratifying because of others in the organization.

“Being a part of the Guard has been an extremely rewarding experience because of the quality of the people you work with,” said Tvinnereim, who has served for 33 years. “There is a great opportunity to build relationships with people.”

First Sgt. Deyo has served in the SDNG for 27 years. She joined the Guard to help pay for the educational costs of obtaining an associates degree in business.

Deyo said that she feels the Guard has given her great opportunities and that she does not feel gender plays a role in the successes or failures of a Soldier.

“Everyone has to work hard to get where they are going,” said Deyo. “If they don’t, they won’t get anywhere, no matter if they are a male or female.”

The Guard has given Deyo the chance to excel and accomplish important goals.

“As the first sergeant, I’m going to be able to help the unit accomplish their future missions,” said Deyo. “I simply enjoy my job and taking care of people.”

MEDEVAC + Aviation unit provides assistance during peacekeeping operation

By Staff Sgt. Stein Larsgaard
SDNG Contributing Staff Writer

CAMP BONDSTEEL, Kosovo – Company C, 1st Battalion, 189th Aviation Regiment (General Services Aviation Battalion), South Dakota Army National Guard, has been providing 24-hour air medical evacuation for NATO’s Kosovo Force.

The 21-member aviation unit, based in Rapid City at the Army Aviation Support Facility, was activated last March for a 12-month tour in support of peacekeeping operations. The deployed Soldiers include pilots, flight medics, crew chiefs and flight operations specialists.

“We received several MEDEVAC (medical evacuation) calls a day during our training that allowed our newer crewmembers to practice and gain experience,” said Staff Sgt. Gregg Holland of Rapid City. “It also helped experienced members to fine tune their skills.”

Spc. Matt Noble, of Sioux Falls, said the training paid off when they launched their first real MEDEVAC in the middle of the night on July 2.

“It was a U.S. Soldier who needed to be treated at Camp Bondsteel Hospital,” said Noble. “It was only a 15-minute flight that would have taken an hour by ground.”

The unit completed its mobilization process at Camp Atterbury, Ind., and then deployed overseas to train at Hohenfels Combat Maneuver Training Center in Germany before heading to Kosovo.

“We have completed months of training,” said Noble. “We are now finally able to do the mission we have been training for, and we are

prepared to help out in any way we can.”

The unit is now stationed at Camp Bondsteel located in the southeast portion of Kosovo, south of Pristina. The unit provides medical evacuation support to more than 15,000 troops stationed throughout the area by responding with the UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter and onboard medical specialists. Each aircraft is capable of evacuating up to four critically injured patients and can also be used to transport troops and haul cargo.

The unit deployed with three of its six helicopters and is attached to 1st Battalion, 106th Aviation Regiment of the Illinois Army National Guard.

According to Noble, the current living conditions exceeded the unit’s expectations as the South Dakota Soldiers moved into “sea huts” that have five large rooms (two-three per room) along with a community bathroom. The base offers two gyms, a large Internet and phone cafe, a post exchange, several smaller shops, and fast-food places such as Burger King and Taco Bell.

This is the unit’s third deployment to the Balkans since 2002 and its fourth deployment overseas in same time frame. In 2002, the unit deployed to Bosnia in support of NATO’s Stabilization Force and successfully completed a tour in Kosovo in 2003 in support of the K-FOR mission. This past spring, the unit provided humanitarian support with its medical evacuation capability in support of Operation New Horizon in Nicaragua.

DAKOTA DUST OFF

(Clockwise from upper left) Capt. Michael McDaniel, Chief Warrant Officer John Wurtz, Sgt. Jared Sampson and Sgt. Shad Tenold from Company C, 1st Battalion, 189th Aviation Regiment (General Services Aviation Battalion), South Dakota Army National Guard, prepare for a mission in their UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter in support of K-FOR on July 2, from Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo. (Army National Guard photo courtesy Co. C, 1/189th AV)



The 16-member South Dakota Army National Guard Embedded Training Team ‘Coyote One’ on April 20, at Mazar-e-Sharif, Afghanistan. (Army National Guard courtesy photo)

‘COYOTE ONE’ Mentoring Afghan Police and Soldiers

By Jasper DesLauriers
Public Affairs Intern

RAPID CITY, S.D. – After several months on duty in southwest Asia, the 16-member South Dakota Army National Guard Embedded Training Team, known as ‘Coyote One,’ is actively engaged in helping Afghanistan advance its independence.

Located at various bases in northern Afghanistan, Coyote One’s mission is to mentor the Afghan National Police and Army, which requires a personal relationship to be forged with the policemen and Soldiers the Guardsmen work with daily.

Lt. Col. John P. Weber, of Rapid City and commander of Coyote One, said even though his team members spend a majority of their time mentoring, communication is still the unit’s greatest challenge because of language and cultural issues.

“Communication is slow, therefore

missions can take longer to accomplish,” said Weber. “Plus culturally, conducting business takes time here. There is the expected protocol

of discussing and asking about one’s family prior to handling any official business.”

Weber added the civilian skills of his South Dakota National Guard team members have greatly enhanced the unit’s ability to accomplish its mission.

“Civilian skills are a tremendous asset to this mission,” said Weber. “This is a very diverse county and the broader range of skills you can bring to the table, the better chance you will have to connect with someone here.”

A typical day for the members of Coyote One includes spending time with their



Master Sgt. Phillip Lakner, of Rapid City, and member of the SDNG’s Embedded Training Team, attempts to speak Dari to a local man during a foot patrol in Baghlan-i-Jadeed, Afghanistan, during the second week of July, to see how locals felt about how the newly trained Afghan Police Force has been performing since receiving their initial training. (Army National Guard courtesy photo)

Afghan counterparts whether they are just down the road or hours away.

“The more we are with our Afghan counterparts the more success we will have,” said Weber. “Getting out with them is the key to mission success.”

But according to Weber, mission success starts back home in South Dakota.

“Our families are truly the ones that make this happen,” said Weber. “What we do here is challenging most days, but what our families are doing back home is equally challenging.”

BATTLE OF THE LITTLE BIGHORN

Providing lessons for future leaders

Story and photos by Capt. Anthony Deiss
Public Affairs Specialist

FORT MEADE, S.D. – Events and decisions that led to the demise of Lt. Col. George Armstrong Custer and his 7th Cavalry Regiment is a lesson students from the Officer Candidate School at Fort Meade, are trying to learn from the Battle of the Little Bighorn.

Hosted by the 196th Regiment, Regional Training Institute, South Dakota Army National Guard, more than 100 officer candidates and instructors traveled to the site of the battle in southeast Montana on Wednesday, July 9, to participate in a staff ride and study the battle that took place between Custer and the Sioux and Cheyenne on June 25, 1876.

“The purpose of a staff ride is to look at historic battles and see what happened on the ground,” said Lt. Col. Gary Miller, senior instructor and Rapid City resident. “It’s a learning exercise for the candidates – what did Custer do right, what did he do wrong, and how does that apply to scenarios the candidates may find themselves in on a future battlefield.”

Utilizing the principles of war, officer candidates study the battle in depth and dissect what went right for the Sioux and Cheyenne and what went wrong for Custer and the more than 260 men that died under his command. The students visit the actual site of the battle and integrate the lessons derived from it.

“The staff ride really brings all the lessons we’ve learned together – teaching us to be effective leaders,” said Officer Candidate Keith Bryant of Sturgis. “It’s a great way to look at both sides – not only in Custer’s failures but also how the Native Americans had success in this battle.”



THE FALLEN
Officer Candidates Keith Bryant (left) and Eric Tobin from the Officer Candidate School at the 196th Regiment, Regional Training Institute, South Dakota Army National Guard, read the grave marker of a fallen Soldier on the hill of “Custer’s Last Stand” during a staff ride on Wednesday, July 9, at the site of the Battle of the Little Bighorn in southeast Montana. In the background stands a memorial dedicated to the more than 260 Soldiers who lost their lives in the battle between Lt. Col. George Armstrong Custer and his 7th Cavalry Regiment and the Sioux and Cheyenne on June 25, 1876.

“You have so many elements that are happening; small-unit activities, command and control, maneuverability,” said Miller. “Both Custer and the Native Americans were fighting, reacting, learning and changing their tactics – that is what we are seeing in Iraq and Afghanistan.”

“It’s an excellent opportunity to visualize the battlefield,” added Officer Candidate Eric Tobin of Rapid City. “There is only so much you can take in from the classroom, but when you walk where the battle actually took place it becomes clear in your mind what actually happened, and why they did some of the things they did.”

This is the second year the Little Bighorn staff ride has been offered as part of the curriculum at the RTI. Developed by retired Sgt. Maj. Robert McPherson, it has become an important part of developing military leaders.

“The staff ride’s sole purpose is to further the professional development of U.S. Army

leaders,” said McPherson, instructor for the College of Eastern Utah: San Juan Campus, Blanding, Utah. “It’s a versatile educational tool used to train junior officers in military tactical thought and operational art.”

McPherson wrote a staff ride book for the training institute with maps and graphics outlining the battle in every detail. With military teaching points and eyewitness narratives, the book gives a gripping account of the events that day.

“What we are trying to stress are the nine principles of war and implement those in the students’ minds,” said McPherson. “Hopefully they will walk away from this experience understanding what they are learning had application back then as well as today.”

Both instructors and candidates alike feel this particular battle is especially suited for helping young leaders prepare for future combat operations and the lessons learned from it will be applied by the next generation



Above: Retired Sgt. Maj. Robert McPherson describes the battle scene to officer candidates from the Officer Candidate School at the 196th Regiment, Regional Training Institute, South Dakota Army National Guard, during a staff ride on Wednesday, July 9, at the site of the Battle of the Little Bighorn in southeast Montana.

Below: Officer candidates from the Officer Candidate School at the 196th Regiment, Regional Training Institute, South Dakota Army National Guard, describe the battle scene from a Soldier vignette during a staff ride on Wednesday, July 9, at the site of the Battle of the Little Bighorn in southeast Montana.

of military leaders.

“With Civil War battles – where there were brigades, regiments and armies and thousands of Soldiers and moving parts – it’s hard for candidates to understand the scope and complexity of what is happening,” said McPherson. “The Little Bighorn battle is ideal for the candidates because you have smaller elements and it’s not to complex to grasp what is going on.”

“I think the lessons we learn from the battle are very applicable to today’s war zone,” said Bryant. “We are fighting a very non-conventional enemy like Custer was. We have to be prepared for anything and the most probable course of action isn’t always the most likely.”

“Waging war is the lot of mankind,” added McPherson. “Perhaps from this particular experience, lessons will be learned to help avoid future errors.”

Fifteen earn officer commissions at ceremony

STURGIS, S.D. – Fifteen officer candidates from the South Dakota Army National Guard were pinned as second lieutenants at a commissioning ceremony on Saturday, Aug. 16, at the Sturgis Community Center.

Completing Officer Candidate School (OCS) on July 25, the ceremony marked the final step in these Soldiers’ quest to become an officer.

“The most challenging part is coming to terms with how you will be perceived as a leader,” said 2nd Lt. Keith Bryant, who was awarded the Erickson Trophy as the top honor graduate.

This year’s class was noted for its military experience since 12 of the candidates served tours in the Global War on Terror.

“These young men and women have been challenged by war,” said Brig. Gen. Keith Corbett, assistant adjutant general. “They are committed to lead with honor and respect.”

Nine of the candidates completed the traditional 14-month course while the six others took the eight-week, “Fast Track” program. Both courses, held at the Regional Training Institute at Fort Meade, train the candidates on basic military tasks including physical training, drill and ceremony and troop-leading procedures. They are placed in high-stress, high-intensity environments and are challenged to make effective tactical decisions.

Several presentations were made throughout the ceremony to include: Continued on page 28



Class 52, Officer Candidate School, SDARNG (Army National Guard photo by Sgt. Theanne Tangen)



Capt. Travis Eastman and Shane Eastman pin their brother 2nd Lt. Cody Eastman, an officer candidate graduate from Clear Lake, S.D., during the Class 52 graduation ceremony on Saturday, Aug. 16, at the Sturgis Community Center. (Army National Guard photo by Sgt. Theanne Tangen)

The SOUTH DAKOTA GUARD and the MICKELSON TRAIL

By Chief Warrant Officer Duke Doering, (Ret.)
SDNG Contributing Staff Writer



RAPID CITY, S.D. – The hundreds of Soldiers’ boot prints may have gone unnoticed by hikers and bicyclists celebrating the 11th annual Trail Trek on the Mickelson Trail in September. But at nearly every turn of the 109-mile trail, the major impact of the South Dakota National Guard’s engineer effort still looms – as a partner in developing this outdoor recreation success.

It was called the Burlington Northern Heritage Trail when the National Guard began working on the project in 1991. Hundreds of Soldiers became involved as bridge builders, truck drivers and heavy equipment operators during five annual training periods.

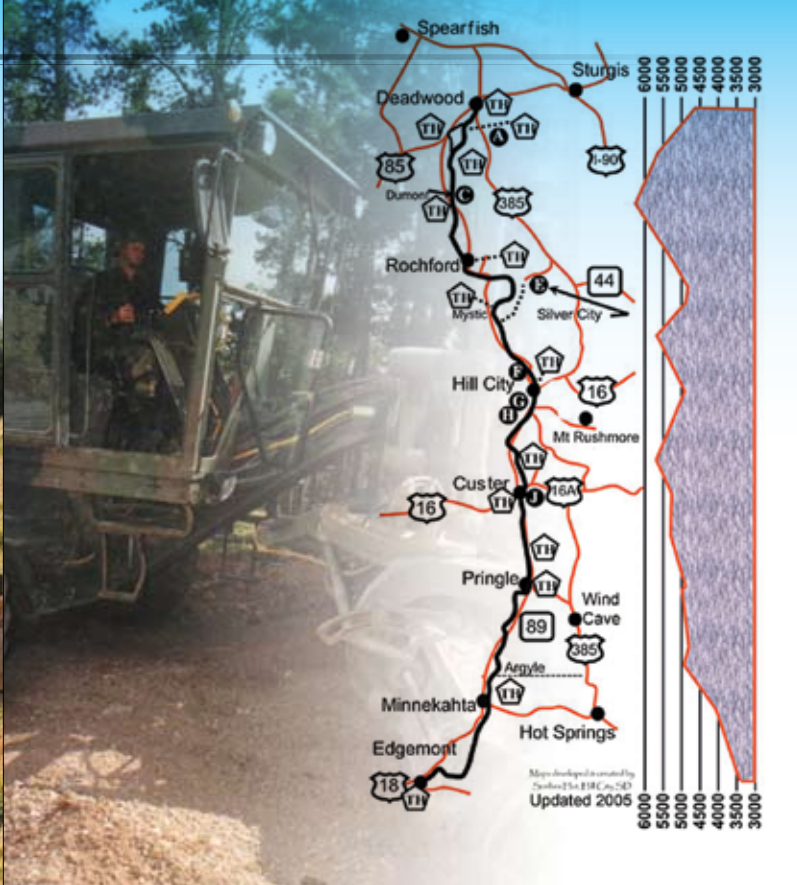
By the time it was dedicated as the George S. Mickelson Trail seven years later, the Guard had built five bridges and re-decked a dozen more, emplaced six culverts, graded 42 miles of trail, and hauled more than 500 truckloads of material.

That first year, a unit from the 153rd Engineer Battalion built one bridge at the Kirk Trailhead on the outskirts of Lead while a detachment of the 842nd Engineer Company, then stationed at Lead, graveled four miles of trail.

When the late Governor George Mickelson presided at a ribbon-cutting ceremony that fall on Sept. 19, 1991, the trail was officially opened. Along with the ceremony came the commitment by the National Guard’s top leader, Maj. Gen. Harold Sykora, to engage in a multi-year campaign to finish the trail.

With Golden Coyote centered in and around Custer that next summer, a small contingent from the 842nd graded and surfaced seven miles of the trail from Custer, south toward Pringle. Decking was nailed and safety railings attached to three existing railroad trestles and the trailhead at the intersection of Highway 385 and Forest Service road 313 north of Pringle was established that June. Governor Mickelson returned in October for a second dedication.

In 1993, the Guard provided a task force in the Hill City area where members applied decking and safety railings on eight trestles.



From 1994 through 1996, units trained in eastern South Dakota or out of state, so no troops worked on the trail. The Guard engineers went back to work on the Mickelson Trail during Golden Coyote 97 when Soldiers from the 153rd built two complete bridges and rebuilt a third in the Rochford area. Heavy equipment operators shaped a portion of the trail near Deerfield Road, Continued on page 28

Meeting for the first time 109th Soldier recalls first drill with new unit

Story by Spc. Nicole Sullivan
Unit Public Affairs Representative
109th Regional Support Group

RAPID CITY, S.D. – Private 1st Class Kyle Buckley, of Rapid City, met his Army National Guard unit for the first time on Sept. 6, by participating in his first of many monthly unit drills at the Range Road Armory with the 109th Regional Support Group.

“The most memorable experience I had would be participating in the Holy Terror Parade in Keystone, S.D.,” said Buckley. “I marched and carried the state flag. People were clapping, cheering and veterans were saluting. I felt honored to be in the Guard and part of it.”

Unlike Advanced Individual Training, where you do the same thing daily, Buckley experienced an array of training and experiences. He did everything from shooting to learning about driving a HMMWV.

“I had no idea what I was in for. I went

to Basic Training and Advanced Individual Training thinking it was the real military experience,” said Buckley.

Buckley returned home from Basic Training and AIT on Aug. 14, from Fort Jackson, S.C. He graduated top of his class

as a student Master Sgt. with a letter of recommendation from his Command Sgt. Maj. He also received the Army Physical Fitness Award.

Buckley went on to say that his experience with the unit was nothing like he expected. He met many new friends and learned how the unit worked together as a team. He felt at ease by the fact that the unit was welcoming.

“It’s easy to come here and be new. I really enjoyed my first drill,” said Buckley.



Airmen return after six-month deployment

SIoux FALLS, S.D. – The final members of the 114th Security Forces Squadron of the South Dakota Air National Guard returned home from Southwest Asia on Sept. 3, after a six-month deployment in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

These Airmen were the last of 31 who deployed in February 2008 to Manas Air Base, Kyrgyzstan, where the unit provided security for the 376th Air Expeditionary Wing. Two other groups of the security forces unit returned in Aug.

During the deployment, the 114th Security Forces Squadron provided force protection for U.S., French and Spanish troops deployed to Manas Air Base, as well as transient personnel moving through the base to or from Afghanistan. Its mission also included providing security for resources, both facilities and aircraft.

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UNITED CONCORDIA

Wellness Branch

Providing new assistance to South Dakota service members

By Capt. Anthony Deiss
Public Affairs Specialist

RAPID CITY, S.D. – It’s known as the Wellness Branch of the South Dakota National Guard and it combines four programs designed to help service members cope with the stresses involved in mobilization and deployment.

Those programs making up the Wellness Branch include the State Family Program, Employer Support to the Guard and Reserve, Transition Assistance and Military Honors. These programs help with the issues service members, families and employers face before, during and after mobilization.

“There are many of services that are available to our South Dakota service members. Issues and concerns that are a result of their deployments,” said Lt. Col. Harvey Fitzgerald, Wellness Branch director. “The Department of Defense has stepped up with more resources and programs to assist these men and women who serve their country.”

Although some of the sections have been established for years, grouping them under one branch helps to coordinate and focus efforts in providing the best services available for service members.

“We want to provide more staff, resources and connectivity between our services,” said Fitzgerald. “It’s a holistic approach to taking care of the service member. We want to take care of them from the time they join the military all the way past retirement.”

Recently returning from Iraq in May, Fitzgerald feels that for service members to be successful, it takes a lot of cooperation between the service members, their families and employers.



South Dakota Army National Guard member Lt. Col. Harvey Fitzgerald of Hermosa, S.D., visits with a local Iraqi on Sept. 29, 2007, near Al-Taji, Iraq. As the new Wellness Branch director, Fitzgerald said his deployment experience is helping him to identify areas throughout the deployment process that may yield better service for all National Guard members. (Army National Guard photo by Maj. David Parker)

“If a service member is being taken care of and doesn’t have to worry as much about his or her family members or job back home, he or she is less stressed and better able to focus on the mission and return safely,” said Fitzgerald, a husband and father of three.

With family being one of the keys to success, the State Family Readiness Program helps to promote healthy military families to be self-reliant during deployment and peacetime. The program provides training, education and outreach services to Guard families.

“Our State Family Program assists military families with answers about medical health care, emergency services, military benefits or any questions a spouse or family may have,” said Fitzgerald.

One of the main efforts of the program is coordinating the family assistance groups found in every deploying National Guard unit. This service brings military spouses and family members together to build a support network and help with issues or questions that may arise while their service member is away. The program also organizes the reintegration and reunion drill assembly; a unit’s first drill back after returning from a deployment.

“It’s a multi-organizational environment, where we partner with Veteran Affairs, health providers, the education office, the Chaplain Corps and other services,” said Fitzgerald, a

former State Family Program director. “We want to get them registered with the VA, answer questions about education, or find resources to help them reduce problems with reintegration.”

Another service provided at the reunion and reintegration drill assembly is Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve.

ESGR is a Department of Defense organization that provides education, consultation and mediation between Guard members and their employers and informing both on their rights and responsibilities when facing a deployment.

“ESGR’s role is critical in establishing positive relationships with employers that allow our Guard members to be able to serve,” said Fitzgerald. “The United States has asked a lot from their employers, and the support from South Dakota’s employers has been great.”

The Hermosa resident knows first hand the support given by employers, as his wife’s employer donated equipment to help rebuild some of their property after it was devastated by a flash flood in August of 2007.

“Even employers of spouses of deployed service members have been helping,” said Fitzgerald. “They recognize the spouse or the family of a deployed service member has their hands full during a deployment and often help where they can.” *Continued on page 28*

Winner School District to be honored with Freedom

By Glenda Blom
Volunteer with the S.D. Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve

RAPID CITY, SD – The Winner School District is one of 15 employers selected nationwide to receive top honors as a 2008 Secretary of Defense Freedom Award recipient.

The Freedom Award is the highest recognition given by the Department of Defense under the auspices of the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve to an employer for their exceptional support to their National Guard and Reserve employees.

The school district was nominated by 2nd Lt. Derris Buus of the 155th Engineer Company, South Dakota Army National Guard. Buus is a fifth-grade teacher and coach for girl’s basketball, football and track with the Winner School District.

“The School District has always supported me and my family during times of deployment or training,” said Buss. “Mary Fischer (former superintendent), Brian Naasz (middle school principal) and Jim Drake (athletic director) have all made it a point to ensure that my family had everything they needed during my absence. They always made it very easy for me to pursue my career in the SDARNG as well as my career as an educator.”

The Winner School District provides a pay supplement for the entire length of its Guard and Reserve employee’s service. Deployed service members received numerous care packages from the school board and the students. To help deployed employees remain



connected to their students, daily e-mails were sent to the deployed employee from students, substitute teachers, principals and the superintendent. To aid with the transition to civilian employment, returning service members teach the same grade and in the same classroom as they did prior to a deployment.

Additionally, the middle school library serves as the video teleconference location, allowing families and service members to speak and see each other during deployments.

School board members also aid the families of deployed employees by

mowing lawns, taking children to school athletic events and, in one instance, tending to an expectant mother throughout her pregnancy.

Winner School District offers hiring preference to Guard and Reserve employees as it has been their experience that service members are “key employees” with strong leadership qualities and work ethic.

On Veterans Day, Winner School District hosts a community-wide program recognizing local veterans and service members both in the faculty and student body.

“The Winner School District is most deserving of the Freedom Award,” said Don Kelpin, S.D. State Chairman of the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve. “Its support is a clear indication of how the district values its service members. Employers are directly linked to our national security by sharing their most precious asset, their employees.”

Sisseton woman selected as National Guard volunteer of the year

By Roger Anderson
Information Officer

RAPID CITY, S.D. – Tammy Chase, from Sisseton, received the prestigious AMVETS PNC John S. Lorec “National Guard Volunteer of the Year” award at the National Guard Family Program conference in St. Louis, Mo., on July 23.

This national award recognizes volunteers for exceptional service to military and family members and to their community. Chase was also awarded \$1,000 for her unit’s family readiness group.

“Her record speaks for itself,” said Chief Warrant Officer Lynn Wright, family readiness assistant at Joint Forces Headquarters in Rapid City. “She’s a truly dedicated and committed volunteer.”

Chase has been an integral part of the South Dakota National Guard’s Family Program since becoming the family readiness group leader for Battery A, 2nd Battalion, 147th Field Artillery, in 1997. For 11 years, she has provided continuous support and assistance to the program, units, service members, and families throughout the state.

“Tammy’s not afraid to tackle a job and keeps coming up with new ideas to generate support,” said Wright. “She is always looking out for the best way to help the families.”

Chase distinguished herself over the years by improving her education and providing leadership and training to others within the National Guard and her community.



Tammy Chase accepts the National Guard Volunteer of the Year Award at the National Guard Family Program convention in St. Louis, Mo. on July 23. (National Guard courtesy photo)

“Her selection just shows the caliber of people we have in this state, dedicated families and great talent,” Wright added.

Chase currently serves as the family readiness group leader for Detachment 1, HHS, 1st Bn, 147th FA.

AWARDS

BRONZE STAR



SFC BROOKS HUAGSE _____ BTRY C, 1/147TH FA
ILT SCOTT GROMER _____ BTRY C, 1/147TH FA
SSG JAY PIPES _____ BTRY C, 1/147TH FA

LEGION OF MERIT



CW5 RONNIE COATES _____ JFHQ DET
COL HARVEY MICHLITSCH _____ HHB, 147TH FA

MERITORIOUS SERVICE MEDAL



MSGT LESLIE DUNCAN _____ 114TH CES
SMSGT DAVID HERMANN _____ 114TH MXS
MSGT CHARLES MAGNUSON _____ 114TH CES
CMSGT LAMAR NANCE _____ SDANG HQ
LTC RICHARD REID _____ 114TH CES
TSGT JASON STEVENS _____ 114TH LRS
LTC JOHN JOHNSTON _____ JFHQ DET
CW3 TERRY BECKLER _____ 147TH ARMY BAND
SGM BRUCE BREKKE _____ HHB, 147TH FA
ISG TERRY KRCIL _____ BTRY C, 1/147TH FA
SSG DANIEL PINKELMAN _____ BTRY C, 1/147TH FA
CPT JASON WARR _____ BTRY B, 1/147TH FA
LTC TIMOTHY MORAN _____ 196TH RTI
SSG DENNIS SCHWEITZER _____ 842ND EN CO
CPT COREY NORRIS _____ 1/196TH RTI (GS)
SFC ERIC JENNINGS _____ 155TH EN CO

AIR MEDAL



CW5 JERRY DUBA _____ DET 48, OSA
CW4 MICHAEL HUSS _____ DET 48, OSA
CW4 WILLIAM GROVES _____ DET 48, OSA
CW3 WAYNE WALKER _____ DET 48, OSA
CW3 JOSE RODRIGUEZ JR. _____ DET 48, OSA

ARMY COMMENDATION MEDAL



SSG RANDALL MCCANN _____ C CO, 1/189TH AV
SGT RORIE KNOCK _____ C CO, 1/189TH AV
CPT KATHLEEN DIRK _____ 881ST TRP CMD
SFC KRISTI PALMER _____ 109TH RSG
SGT GABRIEL DONEY _____ 451ST EN DET
LTC GARY MILLER _____ 196TH RTI
SFC HELEN ROBISON _____ 196TH RTI
MSG KENNETH RAUSCH _____ 196TH MEB
MAJ JOHN BREYER _____ 196TH MEB
SGT JAELA JOHNSON _____ 196TH MEB
SFC DAVID BURR _____ JFHQ DET

AIR FORCE COMMENDATION MEDAL



MSGT CASEY BULLIS _____ 114TH OG
LTC LARRY DEBUHR _____ 114TH MG
MSGT ZONA HORNSTRA _____ 114TH MG
MSGT LOREN BOWDEN _____ 114TH AMXS
TSGT ANDREW MEYERS _____ 114TH AMXS
TSGT MICHAEL PETERSON _____ 114TH AMXS
TSGT SCOTT DEWITTE _____ 114TH MXS
MSGT TODD PANNING _____ 114TH MXS
TSGT TERRY STARKEY _____ 114TH CES
TSGT MICHAEL MARRON _____ 114TH LRS
CPT LONNY REESE _____ 114TH LRS
MAJ EDWIN VANDERWOLDE _____ 114TH LRS
TSGT JOLENE GRAJCZYK _____ 175 FS
MSGT ERIC WOLLAN _____ 114TH FW

ARMY ACHIEVEMENT MEDAL



SSG BROOKS SCHILD _____ BTRY C, 1/147TH FA
SGT TRAVIS SIMMONS _____ 147TH FSC
SGT BRYAN SLACK _____ 1742ND TC
SFC DARREN SANDAL _____ 152ND CSSB
CPT SCOTT BISKEBORN _____ 152ND CSSB
CPT ROBIN FLINT _____ 152ND CSSB
CPT RICKY SWEEN _____ 152ND CSSB
ILT JERI FOSHEIM _____ 139TH BSB
SSG DENYCE CAMPBELL _____ 139TH BSB
SSG ERIC KINSLOW _____ 115TH SNSD
SSG MATTHEW THORN _____ 115TH SNSD
SFC MARK MERIWEATHER _____ 196TH RTI
MSG MARY MALLOW _____ 196TH RTI
SGT JOEL HENRETTY _____ 196TH RTI
CW4 LONNY HOFER _____ 196TH RTI
MAJ JEREMY JERZAK _____ 196TH RTI
MAJ JOE JACOBSON _____ 196TH RTI
CPT DAVE MOORE _____ 196TH RTI
SFC KRISTI ORTIZ _____ 196TH RTI
MSG JACK VON EYE _____ 196TH RTI
CPT KYLE OLDRE _____ 196TH MEB
SGT BRAD PETERSON _____ 196TH MEB
MAJ TODD GOLDDAMMER _____ 196TH MEB
SFC WILLIS HANGMAN _____ 196TH MEB
SSG ELIZABETH CRAWFORD _____ 196TH MEB
SSG JOHN KROHNKE _____ 196TH MEB
MSG JEFFERY GREEN _____ 196TH MEB
SGT CARL LERE _____ 196TH MEB
SSG STEVE BARRS _____ 881ST TRP CMD
SSG SHANNON CRANE _____ 129TH MPAD
SSG AUSTIN HAGEN _____ 216TH EN DET
SPC TRAVIS ASCHWEGE _____ 451ST EN DET
SPC DUAYNE RUONA _____ 451ST EN DET

AIR FORCE ACHIEVEMENT MEDAL



SSGT PAUL CARDA _____ 114TH SVF
SSGT JERRICE FIEGEN _____ 114TH SVF
SSGT JEANETTE GADBOIS _____ 114TH SVF
TSGT MARNE HAGGART _____ 114TH SVF

TSGT BRIAN JOHNSON _____ 114TH SVF
MSGT JASON OTOOLE _____ 114TH SVF
TSGT JESSIE RASMUSSEN _____ 114TH SVF
TSGT NATHAN ROBERTSON _____ 114TH SVF
SSGT ABBEY ROTTER _____ 114TH SVF
TSGT ANDREW DOWNS _____ 114TH MXS
SSGT MATTHEW HUMMEL _____ 114TH MXS
SRA JEFFREY SATRANG _____ 114TH MXS
SSGT KYLE TOBIN _____ 114TH MXS
SSGT DUANE VANDEVENDEL _____ 114TH LRS
TSGT MICHAEL VANDRIESEN _____ 114TH MSF

ARMY GOOD CONDUCT MEDAL



SFC MARCIA HENTO _____ 82ND CST
SGT WAYNE MOSER _____ 82ND CST
SGT ROBERT ROBERTSON _____ 82ND CST
SSG TROY SPEAR _____ 82ND CST
SSG ERIC TOBIN _____ 82ND CST
SFC MICHAEL WEYRICH _____ 82ND CST
SFC ERIC WIECHMANN _____ 82ND CST
SSG ALEXANDER RABER _____ 82ND CST
SSG JOSEPH BAUMANN _____ 82ND CST
SFC KELLY CRANE _____ 82ND CST
SSG DAVID FISCHER _____ 82ND CST
SFC TIMOTHY HINKER _____ 82ND CST
SSG DOUGLAS JOHNSON _____ 109TH RSG

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DECORATIONS

COMBAT ACTION BADGE



SGT CARTER GRAVATT _____ HHC, 109TH RSG
SFC ANDREW GORMAN (DECEASED) _____ HHC, 109TH RSG
MSG DANIEL MCGOUGH _____ HHC, 109TH RSG
SPC WILLIAM ROSALES JR. _____ HHC, 109TH RSG
SPC CHRISTOPHER RIPKA _____ HHC, 109TH RSG

SENIOR AVIATION BADGE



SSG MICHAEL BECK _____ DET 2, CO D, 1ST BN, 189TH AVN
SSG MICHAEL DOTSON _____ DET 1, CO B, 935TH SPT BN
SSG TYSON MORGAN _____ 881ST TRP CMD
SSG CALVIN SCHMIDT _____ 881ST TRP CMD

PROMOTIONS

LIEUTENANT COLONEL

ANDERSON, GREG _____ 114TH AMXS
CURLEY, KEVIN _____ 114TH MXS

FIRST LIEUTENANT

NIEWENHUIS, LANCE _____ 114TH CES

SECOND LIEUTENANT

ABBAS, SHAWN _____ CO A, 139TH BSB
ABBAY, BENJAMIN _____ CO A, 139TH BSB
BIERLE, BILLI JO _____ 881ST TRP CMD
BYRUM, CODY _____ 200TH EN CO
EASTMAN, CODY _____ 740TH TC
EIMERS, KIMBERLY _____ JFHQ DET
MILLER, MARVIN _____ BTRY A, 1/147TH FA
PEARY, JOHN _____ 235TH MP CO
LANGE, BRENT _____ 842ND EN CO
SCHESSelman, JOHN _____ 842ND EN CO
STEWART, THOMAS _____ 842ND EN CO
BRYANT, KEITH _____ 82ND CST
TOBIN, ERIC _____ 82ND CST
TORPEY, STEVEN _____ 109TH RSG
WILLIAMS, MICHAEL _____ 109TH RSG
BACKUS, SCOTT _____ 114TH MXS
BARNETT, TRAVIS _____ 114TH STUF
FRANKLIN, NICHOLE _____ 114TH FW
KEATING, ARIEL _____ 114TH AMXS

FIRST SERGEANT

DEYO, DIANN _____ JFHQ DET
KOLDEN, LESLIE AARON _____ HHD, 139TH BSB
MURPHEY, ROSS ALLEN _____ TNG SITE DET
SCHMIDT, JOHN ALLEN _____ FSC, 153RD EN BN

MASTER SERGEANT

BAUER, JEFFREY SCOT _____ HHD, 139TH BSB
KWASNIEWSKI, GREGG MICHAEL _____ 196TH MEB
SLABA, ROBERT JOSEPH _____ HHC, 153RD EN BN

SERGEANT FIRST CLASS

FERBER, MARK ALAN _____ 211TH EN CO
HUDSON, SHAWN DONALD _____ 211TH EN CO
GROSS, KURT STEPHON _____ DET 1, CO B, 935TH SPT BN
JUELFs, NATHAN JAMES _____ REC & RET BN
LAMBERT, WAYNE ARTHUR _____ BTRY B, 1/147TH FA
OLSON, TRAVIS CARL _____ BTRY B, 1/147TH FA
MAAS, DAVID LEE _____ DET 2, CO D, 1/189TH AV
MARTIN, CHRISTOPHER PAUL _____ 196TH MEB
WIECHMANN, ERIC FRANCIS _____ 82ND CST

SENIOR MASTER SERGEANT (E-7)

SMS WAGNER, JOHN _____ 114TH SFS
SMS HORSTMAN, LEE _____ 114TH CES
SMS GATCHELL, DORIAN _____ 114TH AMXS
SMS ALLEVEN, FRANK _____ 114TH AMXS
MSG SCHNEIDER, TODD _____ 114TH AMXS
MSG SHATTER, WADE _____ 114TH AMXS
SMS VANDERWOUDE, JEFFERY _____ 114TH MXS
SMS DYKSTRA, JOHNNY _____ 114TH MXS
MSG DEWITTE, SCOTT _____ 114TH MXS
MSG HORNSTRA, TRACY _____ 114TH MXS
MSG ELLINGSOON, PATRICK _____ 114TH CES
MSG MCNEIL, DANIEL _____ 114TH CES

STAFF SERGEANT

BAUMANN, JOSEPH DALE _____ 82ND CST
CRANE, SHANNON LYNN _____ 129TH MPAD
FREIDEL, DARREN MICHAEL _____ HHD, 109TH RSG
GOODWIN, DAVID KINER _____ JFHQ DET
STIMES, DAVID ALLEN _____ JFHQ DET
KIRCHBERG, CRAIG JAMES _____ 740TH TC
LICHT, TIMOTHY PAUL _____ 740TH TC
MCCORKLE, JOHN DARRELL _____ CO B, 139TH BSB
NEUGEBAUER, DAVID JOEL _____ 235TH MP CO
SCHREIBER, JOHN WESLEY _____ 881ST TRP CMD
THORN, MATTHEW GEORGE _____ 115TH SNSD
UECKER, JUDY ANN _____ 152ND CSSB
VANHOLLAND, RYAN NEIL _____ 211TH EN CO

TECHNICAL SERGEANT (E-6)

HAGBERG, DONALD _____ 114TH AMXS
DENTOTTER, JEFFREY _____ 114TH AMXS
UMIKER, JOHN _____ 114TH AMXS
CRICHTON, TRAVIS _____ 114TH AMXS
HILLBERG, ALAN _____ 114TH MXS
SCHMIDT, LEO _____ 114TH MXS
ELLEFSOON, ERIC _____ 114TH MXS
MAJERES, ERIC _____ 114TH MXS
LEBRUN, BRIAN _____ 114TH CES
DYER, LANCE _____ 114TH CES
VANDEVENDEL, DUANE _____ 114TH LRS
LARSON, NICHOLAS _____ 114TH LRS
LUVAAAS, MARK _____ 114TH LRS
SELLS, JOSHUA _____ 175 FS

SERGEANT

BACHMAN, JAMIE JOE _____ REC & RET BN
LAFORTUNE, BRENT LLEWLLYN _____ REC & RET BN
BECKER, CODY ALLEN _____ BTRY A, 1/147TH FA
BUTLER, CHARLES JOSEPH _____ BTRY B, 1/147TH FA
BURBACH, JEDEDIAH WALTER _____ BTRY C, 1/147TH FA
KNUDSEN, DONALD LEE JR. _____ DET 2, 147TH FSC
KULESA, WADE KENDALL _____ DET 2, 147TH FSC
BRUDVIG, BARRETT EDWARD _____ DET 2, 147TH FSC

EVANS, DANELLA MARIE _____ 147TH FSC
BROWN, LEE EARL _____ DET 1, 211TH EN CO
COWGER, JACQUELINE RAE _____ MED CMD
HENRIKSEN, TIFFANY CLAIRE _____ MED CMD
JACOBSON, MEGAN LORI _____ DET 1, 1742ND TC
JOHNSON, SARAH JO _____ 740TH TC
MARR, AMANDA JO _____ 152ND CSSB
MCKINSTRY, PAUL EDWARD _____ DET 1, 1742ND TC
MOSEY, DANIEL JAMES _____ DET 1, 1742ND TC
MEYER, JOSEPH DANIEL _____ DET 2, CO A, 139TH BSB
RUMPICA, TYLER MICHAEL _____ DET 2, CO A, 139TH BSB
MOORE, DAVID HENRY _____ CO C, 1/189TH AV
OBERLOH, AARON CHRISTOPHER _____ CO C, 1/189TH AV
OLSON, CHRISTOPHER AARON _____ JFHQ DET
WELCH, GERALD EDWARD _____ JFHQ DET
RIVERA, STEPHANIE MARIE _____ FSC, 153RD EN BN

STAFF SERGEANT (E-5)

LEMCKE, TONIA _____ 175 FS
POPHAM, DREW _____ 114TH OSF
FIEGEN, JERRICE _____ 114TH SVF
MILLER, ANDREW _____ 114TH CES
REECY, MICHAEL _____ 114TH MXS
LOVEJOY, LUCAS _____ 114TH MXS
RINEHART, JENNIFER _____ 114TH MXS
OLSON, ERIC _____ 114TH MXS
LEBRUN, SCOTT _____ 114TH AMXS
DOLNEY, ADAM _____ 114TH AMXS
THORPE, COREY _____ 114TH AMXS



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DAKOTA PACK MAGAZINE

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STATE TUITION ASSISTANCE (STA) FOR NATIONAL GUARD MEMBERS

Members of the National Guard that have completed their Initial Skill Qualification training are eligible for a benefit equal to 50 percent of the “on campus” tuition rate at South Dakota State supported schools. It is the Guard member’s responsibility to notify the school that they belong to the South Dakota National Guard and coordinate with their component for verification of enrollment. Air Guard members must report enrollment to Master Sgt. Rebecca Langloss at the 114th MSF in Sioux Falls 605-988-5705. Army Guard members are automatically enrolled when they apply for Federal Tuition Assistance (FTA) at www.nationalguardbenefits.com.

Guard members utilizing the benefit are responsible for reporting grades or class completion to the appropriate office. Failure to report grades or to complete the class may result in a debt to the school for the benefit amount. Please notify your education office as soon as possible if you are in danger of failing a class or plan to drop a class paid for with STA.

STA may be utilized for distance learning classes or those taken at extension centers like University Center or Capitol University. The benefit will be equal to 50 percent of the tuition rate of campus based courses. This is generally much less than 50 percent of the off campus rate. Off campus tuition has a different fee structure and this has at times caused some confusion. If you have a question or concern please contact the Educational Services Office for Army Guard members or Master Sgt. Rebecca Langloss for Air Guard members.



The state schools will generally grant a deferral of tuition payment for identified guard members. This does not relieve the student of responsibility for payment and the Guard member must report enrollment each semester to the appropriate education office. The statutory limit for supported classes is 128 at the undergraduate level and 32 at the graduate level. Army Guard members must have a degree plan on file with the education office to be eligible for State or Federal Tuition Assistance.

For more information, please contact Lt. Col. Charlie Blasdel 605.737.6729 – Charles.blasdel@us.army.mil

RECRUITING AND RETENTION AMONG TOP LEVELS NATIONALLY

With the present day situations around the world and a level of operational tempo never before seen by our Army National Guard, one might draw the assumption that recruiting and retention could quite possibly be at an all-time low. That assumption however, could not possibly be more wrong.

The South Dakota Army National Guard has continued to recruit Soldiers at levels consistent with our ten year averages and retain Soldiers at levels which continually rank at top levels nationally. This is simply the result of well managed and professionally run units across the state and a true testament to the patriotism of the citizens of South Dakota.

On one side, we are seeing incentives for affiliation and continuation of service at the highest levels we have ever had, but we are also asking for more commitment than ever before. The result is recognition of membership in an organization that is more challenging but also more rewarding than ever before. As we complete another successful year in recruiting and retention, we are gearing up to begin the next.

The question to those men and women across our great state eligible to serve is, will you be the next to join this tremendous team and do your part to serve community, state and nation with the South Dakota Army National Guard.

Your friends and neighbors are counting on you. There has never been a better time to wear the uniform of the Army National Guard nor a better opportunity to serve.



Family tradition

Continued from page 11

“It seems like there’s always some disaster that requires a command post controller,” she added.

One such disaster, Hurricane Katrina, ravaged New Orleans in August 2005. Airman Ross’ first temporary duty assignment took her to the National Guard Bureau as part of its crisis action team for Hurricane Katrina relief.

“I was an airman first class right out of technical school,” she said. “It took a while longer for me to go because I hadn’t even been issued my travel card yet – that’s how green I was,” she said, smiling.

Her job there was to track assets from different states that were supporting the relief efforts in New Orleans so senior Guard leaders would have an accurate sight picture of what resources were coming from each unit.

“At times it was overwhelming, but I learned so much so quickly,” she said. “The experience was invaluable. I feel like I can deploy into any situation, do my job and do it effectively.”

When the crisis action team stood down, Airman Ross returned to her hometown of Sioux Falls, S.D., to provide home-base support for Operation Jump Start, the federal

government’s effort to secure the U.S.-Mexico border. Later, when her leaders at the 114th FW asked for volunteers to deploy in support of the Global War on Terrorism, she raised her hand.

“Volunteering is the only way (Guardsmen) can come over here,” she said. “I felt it was a good time to deploy – it’s right before I start my nursing degree, and I don’t want to go through my entire career without doing anything or going anywhere.”

Deploying to the busiest single airfield in the Department of Defense required some adjustment. Flight following – tracking inbound and outbound air traffic and coordinating ground support – is a task that command post controllers at Joe Foss Field in Sioux Falls don’t perform. In contrast, command post controllers at Joint Base Balad follow an average of 50 flights per day.

Airman Ross has taken on the additional responsibilities with aplomb.

“She’s a stellar controller – always motivated, always eager to learn and always raising the bar,” said Capt. Rodney Silva, the 332nd AEW Command Post chief. “She’s forthright, she’s honest, and she upholds standards the way everyone in the Air Force should.”

Command post controllers have to

maintain constant situational awareness, Silva said. They have to coordinate operations among the Tanker Airlift Control Center at Scott AFB, Ill., the Air Mobility Division in Southwest Asia, and the Transient Alert and Air Terminal Operations Center here. They also have to be ready to respond to indirect fire attacks, fires and other incidents on base.

“It’s interesting to go from the peacetime perspective, with the unit readiness exercises and the operational readiness inspections, to a wartime environment where you’re using the skills you’ve always practiced,” said Ross.

Airman Ross will begin taking classes toward her nursing degree through the University of South Dakota shortly before she returns from her deployment. She volunteers at the Air Force Theater Hospital, both to help the 332nd Expeditionary Medical Group staff and to learn more about the job.

“She’s always focused and learning,” said Capt. Silva. “Instead of just performing tasks, she’s always aware. Airman Ross took charge and saw her projects come to fruition – this deployment rotation was lucky to have her.”

Once she earns her second degree, Airman Ross said she plans to apply for an Air Force commission and continue her military career until she retires – a continuing testament to her family’s commitment to serve.

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Wellness Branch

Continued from page 22

While the State Family Program and ESGR help make the transition prior to and during a deployment easier, the transition assistance advisor helps Guard members make the transition after returning home.

The advisor helps veterans find the benefits earned as a result of their deployment. Working closely with VA offices, the advisor helps to establish educational benefits, disability claims, health claims or what ever services the veteran may need.

“The advisor answers questions and pursues issues on behalf of the veteran,” said Fitzgerald. “They are an advocate, helping them to find the services they need.”

The Wellness Branch also provides a Military Honors Coordinator to help families coordinate the final funeral honors of a service member who has passed away. The service is provided for service members whether making the ultimate sacrifice in service to their country or dying of natural causes.

All four of the Wellness Branch services are not just for South Dakota National Guard members, but for all members of the military to include active duty, Reserve and retired.

With more service members needing assistance, one of the goals for the new Wellness Branch director is to provide even more services.

“We are able to provide more services in-house rather than having to make a referral to another agency,” said Fitzgerald. “We want to integrate our State Chaplain Office and our Medical Command into our services. We also want to provide more post traumatic stress disorder, traumatic brain injury and suicide awareness training to our Guard members and their families.”

As an agri-business specialist during his Iraq tour, Fitzgerald said his experience is helping him to identify areas throughout the deployment process that may yield better service for all military members.

“Going through the mobilization process and seeing it through the Soldier’s eyes helps me to determine what information is getting out to them and how to get those services,” said Fitzgerald. “It helps me to see where we need to emphasize our efforts so our veterans are getting the right benefits and care.”

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT ALL THE WELLNESS BRANCH SERVICES, PLEASE CONTACT:

Lt. Col. Harvey Fitzgerald at (605) 737-6206 or contact any of the branch sections directly:

- State Family Program 605.737.6728
- Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve 605.737.6540
- Transition Assistance Advisor 605.737.6669
- Military Honors Coordinator 605.737.6927

OCS

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- The Battalion Leadership Development Award was presented to the 153rd Engineer Battalion for having the greatest number of students graduating from OCS.
- Benjamin Abbey received the Army Physical Fitness Test Award for obtaining the highest score on the fitness test.
- Marvin Miller won the Endeavor Award for demonstrating the highest degree of consistent advancement, perseverance and devotion to duty throughout the year.
- The Superintendent Academic Award was presented to Cody Byrum who attained the highest academic rating for the year (95.5 percent).
- Keith Bryant received the Reserve Association Plaque for attaining the highest leadership grades for the training year.

THE FOLLOWING IS A LIST OF GRADUATES OF OFFICER CANDIDATE SCHOOL CLASS 52:

- Shawn Abbas _____ Pierre, CO A, 139TH BSB
- Benjamin Abbey _____ Wessington, CO A, 139TH BSB
- Billi Jo Bierle _____ Sturgis, 881ST TRP CMD
- Keith Bryant _____ Webster, 82ND CST
- Cody Byrum _____ Pierre, 200TH EN CO
- Cody Eastman _____ Clear Lake, 740TH TC
- Kimberly Eimers _____ Rapid City, JFHQ DET
- Brent Lange _____ Brookings, 842ND EN CO
- Marvin Miller _____ Hartford, BTRY A, 1/47th FA
- John Peary _____ Pierre, 235TH MP CO
- John Schesselman _____ Rapid City, 842ND EN CO
- Thomas Stewart _____ Rapid City, 842NDEN CO
- Eric Tobin _____ Pierre, 82ND CST
- Steven Torpey _____ Rapid City, 109TH RSG
- Michael Williams _____ Rapid City, 109TH RSG

Mickelson Trail

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installed four concrete culverts between Rochford and Hill City, and graded six miles of trail between Mystic and Hill City.

The big push to complete the trail followed the next summer when Golden Coyote forces bivouacked at Dumont. Two bridges were constructed near the Rochford Fire Station while three concrete culverts were installed about three miles south of Dumont.

The 842nd Engineers prepared the roadbed and graded 17 miles, starting at Dumont and finishing three miles past Mystic. The 211th Engineer Company from Lemmon and Mobridge hauled and spread gravel on that stretch.

Guardsmen from across the United States were in the Black Hills for Golden Coyote ‘98. A Texas Guardsman spoke for many who were in awe of the beauty of the trail from Rochford to Mystic when he said, “This might not be the most beautiful spot in the world, but it certainly would not be very far down on the list.”

Despite the all-out effort during annual training, several miles of the trail remained unfinished. That’s when a crew of 14 National Guard Soldiers signed on to help complete the trail from Pringle south toward Edgemont. Throughout August and September, this task force combined with the Forest Service and the Game, Fish and Parks for the difficult task of clearing the roadbed.

They operated D-7 dozers to remove the rock ballast so that graders could smooth the surface for crushed gravel. Even after the ballast was removed, railroad spikes flattened dozens of tires on the graders. Further complicating the task, a July fire had destroyed a bridge seven miles north of Edgemont and a 50-foot corrugated metal culvert was installed in place of the bridge.

Major construction on the trail ended that summer as several hundred dump truck loads of crushed aggregate were delivered to the trail as the graders leveled and smoothed the final 42 miles of trail surface.

With the completion of the Mickelson Trail in September of 1998, representatives of the National Guard, Game, Fish and Parks, and the National Forest Service, hundreds of hardworking citizens, along with financial supporters were recognized for their efforts at the grand opening and dedication ceremony in Deadwood.

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